

THE AGE OF PROGRESS.

Devoted to the Development and Propagation of Truth, the Enfranchisement and Cultivation of the Human Mind.

STEPHEN ALBRO, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

BUFFALO, SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 1855.

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Poetry.

From the Chicago Budget.

Ministering Angels.

[He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee.]

Do angels visit this fair earth.

This scene of evil deeds.

Where mortals sin on from their birth.

And innocence oft bleeds!

With plumed wings do they descend

To men of low estate?

To frailty their assistance lend.

To whom all things avail?

When dangers threaten, and our feet

Are falling in the snare—

Do they not whisper low and sweet,

In gentle tones—"Beware!"

And when our path is dark and dim,

And we are bowed with fear—

Are they not sent from Heaven by Him

To whom all things avail?

To guide us, and direct aright

Our feeble steps and slow;

And to illumine with Heavenly light

Our journey here below?

Yes, these winged messengers of love

To erring man are given.

To call his thoughts from earth, above,

To lead him home to Heaven.

And though to mortal eyes unseen,

These watchers o'er our way—

They've led us whither we've been,

They guard us night and day.

Miscellany.

The Bachelor's Diary.

I am a single gentleman living in lodgings,

and having nothing in particular to do, I pass

my time in taking note of what passes within

the range of my vision. How a baker's shop,

which I never entered in my life, should become

an object of deep interest to me, it is hard to

say. Perhaps they who read my story may be

better able to tell than I am myself. It would

seem I have fallen in love with it at night, and

by seeing only what any body else may see;

for certain it is I am not a Devil upon two

sticks, nor any devil at all, except a devil of a

good fellow. Indeed, I have not any ground

for claiming kindred with genius on the score

of bodily deficiencies or mental aberrations. I

am not even lame. I have the vulgar number

of members, and am obliged to acknowledge I

have the use of them all. I don't wear a dirty

shirt when I have a clean one beside me, and

I get my hair cut once a month. I don't

go without a neckcloth in summer; and I have

not even originally enough to leave half my

beard unshaven. I get hungry about feeding

time almost as naturally as a beast; and, like

the common herd of mankind, I go to bed some

time after I am sleepy, and rise sometime after

I am refreshed. I am therefore a very ordinary

person, and am like a traveller, who must

ever have been a very obscure and uninteresting

individual, had not either fortune or mis-

fortune, or both, thrust distinction upon him;

or a "belated peasant," who on his way home

"sees, or dreams he sees," something, the tell-

ing of which confers a momentary interest on

his stolid pate; and were it not that I live in

a hole in the wall, somewhat resembling the

Keeper's Tower in Bridewell, from which I

can see the abodes of others without being more

observed myself than I choose, I should not

have had anything worth chronicling.

Such being my situation, and as one cannot

read or smoke all day, I began to look about

me from the windows of my lodgings; and my

sight, I am ashamed to confess, comes under

the general sentence of sufficiency applicable to

my other faculties. The first thing, of course,

that I looked for was a joke, and I described a

servant girl with satin shoes, surmounted by

limbs of the freshest rosy red imaginable. I

could not resist mentioning it to a French-Amer-

ican gentleman, who was in town at the time.

It was the most unpolite thing I ever was

guilty of; and if he happen to be of the Nodder

family, I fear I may have subjected the Edin-

burgh ladies to a serious calamity. My amusement for one day was furnished by a white

mouse in a revolving cage; and I next espied

an old maid (a mature old maid of fifty or six-

ty) who was almost as frightened for being seen

by me when dressing, as I was lest I should see

her. She mounted a double blind much to my

relief. The ludicrous failing me, and hating

the ludicrous, I cast about my regards for

something snug, amusing, and comfortable,

when my eyes alighted on "the Baker's Shop."

Like a person who sits down for the first time

in a well-constructed chair, I felt at once what I

was fitted, and made a settlement accordingly;

and I have ever since enjoyed comfort and com-

petency reflected from the baker's shop and

mansion.

I once lived six years in the same lodging

house with a fellowlodger whom I never saw

more than I have seen the Stout Gentleman.

We were the only lodgers in the house, and I

heard of him, as a matter of necessity, every

day in some form or other. Him I know per-

fectly without ever having seen him. The baker

and his family I knew by seeing them with-

out hearing of them or speaking to them—in

fact, I knew them well; and am convinced that

it is not necessary to hear people speak in order

to be familiar with them.

I felt a little awkward in my new situation

at first, like a servant who goes to a new place

or a cat making a pilgrimage to a new domicile

at a Whitsunday term. For a short time

nobody took any notice of me; I was a stranger

to their habits, and did not know even the

hours of their meals. These hours I soon

learned from observing an unwonted state of

quiescence of the family, down to servants and

children. As to the breakfast hour, I don't

choose to be more special, than merely to state

that it is at some hour or other before ten. At

first, too, I went a good deal at random among

the stray "pretence boy who went in to pocket

a penny roll and disappeared to be seen no

more, and the servant who carried in his pocket

the tally-book containing a half hundred of

hebdornal accounts, all regularly scored off

to the last week. But, though virtue is said

to be its own reward, knowledge seems to be

a step before it; for the acquisition of knowledge

is often its own reward. So it was in this

case. I could guess at the temper of two boys

almost as correctly as Combe could have done,

by observing how each expended his penny in

the hour between forenoon and afternoon

school; and I have seen two little girls, after

a lengthened consultation, choose, the one a

petticoat tail, and the other a penny roll—

taste and fancy the one—size, substance, and

matter of fact the other. Then to see the

exertion made to pack a bulky purchase into

a boy's breeches-pocket, or a girl's side pendu-

lum; and to remark the air of assumed insu-

periority with which they walked along after the

operation was achieved, little dreaming that

there is an eye above which marks and records

the roguery. I can calculate how business

goes on in the adjoining gin shop by the quantity

of batch, called for. I know perfectly

how many biscuits are baked a week, and when

the sponge is set, and what days biscuit and

cookies are manufactured. I was a good deal

taken aback at first by the Jewish custom of

commencing the labours of the week on Sunday

afternoon; but when I had found by a week

or two's experience that on Sundays Plato's

temporary usurpation of the shop, the centre

of attraction in a tradesman's house, was resist-

ed by Apollo, simply through a single em-

brace in the form of a rectangular opening

at the top of the window shutter; and when it

occurred to me that if there were no work on

Sunday evening, there would be no hot rolls

on Monday morning, the point where my con-

science pinched was instantly relieved.

The first unequivocal symptom I experi-

enced of having become attached to the family,

was a strange uneasiness I felt on seeing another

baker's servant pass the door with a basket

of loaves on his head. I looked upon it as an

unjustifiable intrusion, thought the bread quite

as indifferent as appearances justified, and

wished the fellow might rather break his leg

than come back the same way. I soon dis-

covered that it was, fortunately, a circumstance

of rare occurrence.

The most arduous part of my duties consists

in taking care of the children

Age of Progress.

STEPHEN ALBRO, Editor.

BUFFALO, APRIL 28, 1855.

False Representations of the Deity.

Without these, men would never have said: "There is no God." Atheism is the legitimate offspring of false teachings in relation to God's nature, attributes and government. The bugger-man, of the nursery; the Devil, who comes from heathen darkness; and the God of modern christian orthodoxy, are all of the same fictitious character, and are all used to frighten children of various ages and growths into obedience to those whose province it is supposed to be to rule them. Ignorance and folly have instituted this system of government and substituted it for the rational one, which would lead mind in the way it should go, by the counsels of wisdom, reason and truth. "If you do not mind what your mother says, the bugger-man will come and carry you off" is the language of her who governs in the nursery. At a later age, the boy who now does not believe in the bugger-man's reality, is told that, if he do not mind his ways, the devil will get him. And, in all after life, the wayward child of error is threatened with the vengeance of God.

Those shall love God with all their heart, with all their mind, and with all their strength, the teacher; and if thou dost not, He will send thee to hell, where he will keep thee in torment eternally. Now, every one who is in the least acquainted with human nature, knows that love is a passion which cannot be thus excited. If it could, the man who is the most unlovely in person and disposition, would have nothing to do but to arm himself with instruments of cruelty and death; and go and command a beautiful, virtuous and lovely virgin to place her heart's fond affections upon him immediately, or he will first flay her with the raw-hide which he holds in his hand, and then shoot her with the revolver he carries in his pocket. In this way, he might extort a lying declaration of love from her; but she would hate him with her whole soul. The principle will not do. A continuous tribute of love and fear may be demanded for the God of the orthodox church; but no such tribute can be given. There is no affinity between the two elements of which it is to be compounded, and they will not more mingle than oil and water. Where fear is, love cannot dwell; and vice versa. We may tremble before a tyrant, prostrate ourselves at his feet, and even kiss his foot, if he require it; but to love him, is not an act to be performed by those physical functionalities which are held subservient to the will power. If the hands or feet or any other member of the body which is exercised by the muscles, in obedience to the mandate of the will, could love a tyrant, he might command and receive that kind of homage. But, as this cannot be, he must be content with heartless subservience and hypocritical adulation; for the soul, which cannot be coerced, must necessarily refuse to love an unlovely object.

The character which leading theologians have given to the Great Architect, and Ruler of the Universe, and which has been and is received as a true representation of His nature and attributes, may be better gathered from those poetic effusions, which have, for more than a century, been sung in churches, in family worship, in nurseries, and in all places where even two or three have been gathered together in the name of the Lord. This constating of sentiments into the ears of each other, and of children in all stages of physical and intellectual development, is a most potent process of making such sentiments common; and we think we are warranted in the assertion, that it does ten times as much as all the preaching of the aggregate clergy, to rivet, early impressions upon the mind.

Dr. Watts, who was a celebrated Divine, philosopher, poet, and mathematician, and whose psalms and hymns have furnished sacred song for the most of the churches, of England and America, ever since his day, may be taken as good authority for orthodox sentiment in relation to the character of the Deity. Listen to him:

Adore and tremble, for our God
Is a consuming fire;
His jealous eyes his wrath inflame,
And raise his vengeance higher.
Almighty vengeance, how it burns!
How bright his fury glows!
Vast magazines of plagues and storms
Are treasured for his foes.
Those heaps of wrath, by slow degrees
Are fired into a flame;
But kindled, oh how fierce they blaze,
And rend all nature's frame.
At his approach the mountains flee,
And seek a wat'ry grave;
The frightened sea makes haste away,
And drowns up every wave.
Through the wild air the weighty rocks
Are swept as hail-stones hurled;
Who dares engage his fiery rage,
That thunders from the clouds?
We will give another sample, from the same Rev. author, of which we fear not to hazard the opinion, that it has caused more life-long gloom, depression and sadness of spirit; more severe mental anguish; more death-bed horrors and maniacal ravings, and caused more permanent insanity, than any thing else that has been written within the last three centuries:

My thoughts on awful subjects roll,
Damnation and the deed,
What horrors seize the guilty soul,
Upon a dying bed!
Ling'ring about these mortal shores,
She makes a long delay;
'Till like a flood, with rapid force,
Death sweeps the wretch away.
Then swift and dreadful she descends
Down to the fiery coast;
Amidst abominable fumes,
Here's a frightful host.

Three endless crowds of sinners lie,
And darkness marks their chains;
Tortured with keen despair they cry,
Yet wait for better pains.

Not all their anguish and their blood
For their own guilt atone,
Nor the compassion of a God
Shall hearken to their groans;

Here we find the Infinite Source of all mercy, goodness, beneficence and love, represented as an all-powerful fiend, in whom there is nothing lovable; and still those into whose ears this character is poured, from infancy to old age, are sternly commanded to love him; or pain of eternal and infinite misery. This the rational soul revolts at. It cannot obey. What then? Why, the next is, to look about and see if there is no escape from the cruelty of the omnipotent tyrant. Here the thought strikes the enquirer: It may be that there is no God. He nurses it as a mother nurses a darling child; and it waxes stronger daily, till it becomes the established faith of his soul, and he is an *Atheist*. And this change, revolting and freeing as it is to the free, warm, spiritualized mind, is a happy conversion from a blind faith in a tyrannical, merciless and vengeful Deity, whose wrath is continually boiling over, and who seems pleased with an opportunity to exercise his omnipotence in acts of vindictiveness and cruelty.

Who can wonder at the prevalence of Atheism? Surely no one, excepting those who believe in the existence of some great first cause, but deny the spiritual existence of man in a future state. When we express an opinion that these two classes of "infidels" embrace five-sixths of all the thinking minds in Christendom, we do not do justice to the extent of our convictions. Nor do we do violence to our conscience when we affirm that theological misrepresentation of our Heavenly Father's nature and attributes, is the parent of all this infidelity.

The mission of spiritualism, is to establish a more rational theism in this world of religious darkness and error, and to make known to every human soul the true character of its Heavenly Parent.

Spiritual Lectures in our present number.

The reader will perceive that we have a lecture from the spirit of FRANCIS S. OSOON, who was well known to the lovers of American literature, in her earth life. Notwithstanding the great difficulties of communicating through batteries of spirits inferior to herself, and through a medium in the form, by means of the alphabet and raps, she will be found almost as literary, and quite as interesting, as ever.

Professor DAYTON is highly philosophical and instructive, in this weeks lecture. It requires careful and thoughtful reading.

The Autobiography, by the spirit of an Englishman, who refuses to give his name, is too full of genuine pathos to be read without emotion, by any one with a heart attuned to sympathetic sensibility. We have almost an *"Aunt Charley"* curiosity to know his name.

The third lesson of the series, through Rev. C. HAMMOND, not only keeps up, but increases the interest. It is almost as wonderful to us, that the mode of communicating by evanishing letters of gold, on a steel plate, has been discontinued, as that it was introduced and so successfully practised.

The spiritual poetry which we give in this number, is, doubtless, the best the spirit author could do under the circumstances. Even those who could produce a high order of poetry, when in the flesh, frequently find it impracticable to get up to mediocrity, when they attempt to poetize through an unpoetical medium. The phreno logical development of the medium, has much, very much, to do with the quality of whatever is transmitted through it. And we are led to believe that spiritual poetry is more affected in this way than prose. When the organ of poetical numbers is wanting no spirit could transmit, through the medium, such poetry as is communicated through Rev. T. L. HARRIS. There is, probably, no rapping medium in America, through whom such lectures can be communicated as those which we receive through Miss BROOKS. Yet we have poetry, communicated through her, which we have refused to publish, on account of its inferiority; although it purported to come from one who wrote poetry of a high order, when in the flesh.

Hogs Drunk.
The Noblesville, (Indiana) Patriot gives an amusing account of the destruction of five hundred dollars worth of liquor by the temperance people. Some seventy barrels were consumed. The Dayton ale would not burn, of course, and the Patriot says: "The next morning droves of hogs licked the foam of beer, drank the half-frozen spirits, and soon Mr. Parker began to bang his head and lop his ears, swinging head towards tail and tail towards head, showing the whites of his eyes and opening his mouth as if things didn't feel right in his internal arrangements. They soon took a line for the river, but occupying all sides of the street—in imitation of his more noble companion, the biped. Didn't catch them at it the second time. They were seen for days after standing sullenly and sagaciously beside a fence, looking if the Maine law was in operation."

PASTE FOR CHAPPED HANDS.—Mix a quarter of a pound of unsalted lard, which has been washed in salt water, and then in rose-water, the yolks of two new laid eggs, and a large spoon full of honey, and as much fine oatmeal or almond paste as will work it into a paste.

COMPLAINING.—I WILL chide no brother in the world, but myself; against whom I know most faults.—*Shakespeare.*

The following is the third of the series of lectures, given on plates, through the spiritual vision of Rev. C. HAMMOND, of Rochester.

KNOWLEDGE AND IGNORANCE.

LESSON III.

ROCHESTER, Nov. 4th, 1853.

In the progress of human events, vagrancy and crime, pride and wealth, power and servitude, have revealed themselves, and enlisted the sympathy of the benevolent to eradicate these evils from the social brotherhood of man. Under wise rule, human happiness is promoted; under ignorance and tyranny great injuries have been inflicted. The ties of sympathy have been severed by passion, envy, ambition, thirst for glory, fame, honor, renown; and barbarous crimes have been perpetrated to enforce obedience to the mandates of arbitrary rule. Strangers to the philosophy of universal brotherhood, the kindness of a generous philanthropy has been ignored, to gratify a misguided ambition and selfish aggrandizement.

Pause! Reflect! Cast your eyes over the bloody pages of history! Learn from thence a lesson not worthy of adoption but of caution! Reverence not the inhumanity of bloody conflicts! They are the mournful lessons of worse than brutal violence, enacted in the face of smiling nature, stooping down to bless even the cruel dependants on her bounty. In the face of reason, justice, God, heaven and its inhabitants, stayest not all these lights, loves, influences, the hand, dipped in blood, from the cruel assassination of his brother man. What though all nature proclaims order and harmony, what though the voice of ten thousand seraphs chant a melody of divine love, what though the holy angels bend down to earth, and teach man nature's laws; yet, unheard, unheeded, or uncared for, they are powerless for good, and all the lofty aims to ameliorate, reform, socialize, and elevate, the brotherhood of man are fruitless. Under such discouragements, we come, and, giving our banner to the breeze, we shall follow our leader, who stands at the head of all principalities and powers, of things in heaven and on earth; and whose name is above every name, because it is Infinite; and in him we live—the infinite life of the universe, approachable by the human understanding, only as it can comprehend the Deity.

I am disposed, this evening, to suggest two questions: First, the utility of knowledge. Second, the disadvantages of ignorance.

Knowledge is the comprehension of things, their relation to each other, and the laws by which they are governed. A knowledge of rules, or laws, is well; when such knowledge is of practical service to mankind. To know that you exist is one thing. To know that others exist, is another thing. To know by what law you and others exist, is another thing. You exist because something existed prior to give you existence. What that something is, may be known by the things which are made. And the wisdom of the maker is seen in the work finished.

Again, the thing made bears a relation to the maker, because in it, are found the vital elements of him who controlled it, transferred from the hand that made the work; or in other words, the vital, living, active power which fashioned the work, left its impress there; so that, in seeing man, however finite he may be, you see the element of God, in the degree of finity to infinity, and the relation is as indissolubly established as cause and effect. This is one point.

Now, proceed, and look at other works—beings—constituting the human race. Have they not all vitality, life, power, perception, judgment, which enable them, in their sphere, to act as independent individuals? Do not all these individualities originate in one and the same cause? What then? This is the only—a common origin; and all effects, originating in one and the same cause, must have a resemblance to each other, inasmuch as a cause can not send forth dissimilar effects, yet, a combination of causes may send forth varieties, or, more properly, degrees.

Now, man, universal man, is but an emanation of the Infinite; each individual being a ray of light, and consequently, sustaining a relation to other rays. But there are superior and inferior rays or emanations, and in all the numberless multitudes, no two are precisely of the same dimensions. A knowledge of the relation, subsisting and existing by an immutable law between the Great First Cause and man, will necessarily lead to the following practical results:

First, the larger emanations, so to speak, and be understood, are capable of reflecting more light than the inferior stars in the firmament; and the inferior are capable of receiving more light than those of a more brilliant appearance, from the common sun which illuminates the whole.

Planets nearest the common center of light have not the distance to travel, in order to become merged, enveloped, in the full flood of the light of the sun, that those planets have which stand in a more remote relation. Consequently, the most remote planets must necessarily make the greatest advance to overtake those nearest the center, to do which greater speed is required; and in order that greater speed may be induced, stronger attractions must be presented. Hence it is, that the more remote any mind may be from the communicator of knowledge and light, the greater should be the effort to bring it into harmony. And all the planets, in near proximity to the center, should attract by their inviting influences the most remote, that they may all be drawn into one common center of union in love and wisdom.

But truth teaches, that those who are nearest the centre cannot force the more remote to approach, neither can the more remote force themselves. Therefore, all approximation to the standard centre must be of an attractive character, because whatever is repulsive must necessarily push them farther away. On this

principle, the reform sought to be accomplished, in the present age must rest. Now,

Second, and I shall close. The disadvantages of ignorance will lead individuals to act, whatever may be their position and relation to other planets, so as to repulse them, not understanding or comprehending the law of attraction, and its power to draw minds to God and heaven. Hence, you perceive, that even individuals claiming to be near the great center of knowledge, and truth, and heaven, act adversely to the advancement of other planets; first, by threatening, menacing, arrogance; and second, by exciting fear and distrust, by which no progress is made to the great centre of love and wisdom—God—and heaven appears uninviting, and repels those whose faces are turned toward them.

Spiritual Autobiography.

The following sketch of the earth-life of a communicating spirit, as made by himself, has been kindly furnished us by an esteemed lady friend in this city, who is a member of the circle to whom it was communicated. We are not permitted to give names; but we will venture to give an extract from our friend's private note, which will be a sufficient preface to the communication.

"Mr. ALBRO:—At meetings of our circle, we have received several articles from a Spirit giving, for signatures, 'PRESTES' and 'LAXANDER'; both said to be fictitious. As our interest deepened, on reading his articles, we asked him for his history; which request he has very kindly complied with. It is, to us, both interesting and instructive. If you should deem it sufficiently so to warrant its publication, you are welcome to use it."

We thank our friend for the favor, and shall, with pleasure, avail ourselves of the liberty she gives us to publish the communication. Here let us embrace the opportunity to invite all private circles and mediums, when they receive any thing of an extraordinary or startling character, to send it to us without hesitation. We must, of course, be allowed to judge of the expediency or inexpediency of publishing what may be sent us. But we shall be just as grateful for that which we find it necessary to reject, as for that which we use.

MY LIFE.

Submitted to you for perusal; read carefully, that you may draw a lesson. As yet I was not adjudged perfect, learn why I was not. I committed no crime; yet I sinned against God and man. Ye can learn but little while I have a brother in your sphere.

My father was a proud, austere man, formed to command; and one who thought, unless he ruled his household with an iron rod, he were but half a man; and any swerving on his part, from a command gone forth, was derogatory to his manliness. My mother, a timid, confiding, gentle creature, learned by lessons hard, each weighing on her tender heart, with its crushing influence, that his word was law; and that no remonstrance could mould him to her heart's aspirations.

We were brothers, James and I, and often my chafed spirit rose in tumult within at his taunting epithets, or proud rejoinders. For know, we were born and bred in England, where their accursed laws give to the eldest brother an inheritance which raised him to superiority, and degrades his near of kin; giving him power to break and wound the feelings of the younger; and oh, how often destroying all affection that would bind heart with heart, and strengthen that heavenly tie that could enable them to live and die for each other.

Oh, my gentle lovely mother! how often have I wept o'er thy wrongs, knowing no hand of mine could stay that tide of grief, nor power of my heart enable thee to look up and feel cheered by my words of love. No, when the one on which thou shouldst have leaned, proved cold, couldst thou, with thy heart's constancy, turn and pour into thy child's ear, thy wrongs? No, mother, in thy heart buried, lay all thy secret we, treasured there, for love of him, that, to the idle world, it might tell no tale that would bring him to its curse. Yet, angel mother, there was one, judging hearts by that standard which God has given—judging with intellect and reason. He knew where lay the tigers heart, and where its prey. Yes, from that moment, light burst upon me. I must be thy defender. I saw thee weep in secret. I saw thee come forth pale, with a smile upon thy lips. I knew grief and smiles had no affinity; so I watched and guessed thy secret. Oh! how my heart went out in prayer to thee, my God, thou Father of widowed hopes and griefs so buried—went out in prayer to thee, that thou wouldst look down and give a broken heart relief; or if it must bear on, learn it now that it might not 'dam her life's stream. Ah! little did I know how fearful was its ebb and flow already. Little did I know that love thrown back upon the heart, had such a crushing power. I only knew that love thrown out, has strength, adds life, and bids us, amid all other woes, live on rejoicing.

I watched thee with a tender care. I saw thee pale and feeble, less inclined for life's duties, such as thy station required. I saw thee calm, oh, how calm; it startled me; the change did; yet my father saw it not; saw not; thy failing strength; thy crushed heart; thy calm submission; and on that fatal day, when he said, 'Go forth, be gay with the happy ones, who are always gathered at our home' when he reproached thee for thy mooping; called thee stupid, dull, deceiving, and thy only answer was a look to heaven, and a tear. Think thou that there was power in heaven or earth, to stay my tumultuous feelings—to calm the rising thought, that what e'er might happen, I would stretch my hand for thee—would give one love token in thy defence. That love token was a reproof to my father; the austere, the proud,

the iron hearted; a reproof to him; it was not gentle; it could not be. I saw myself, dear mother, only thee; I spoke for thee, dear mother, only thee; it was enough; my father branded me with shame; called me ungrateful, disobedient, and cast me on the world with this my fortune; and hugged my brother with all his worldliness; hugged, nurtured, cared for him; and when he died, made him a courted Lord, and me a beggar.

The tiger roused within me; it could not sleep; it walked forth roaring for its prey, and would not be appeased. My mother's hand, stretched forth in timely warning, saved me from crime; crime, the thought of which had been planted there by you; father of all my woe and sin; and on you must it rest; and should this ever reach your eye, know that, in my spirit home, I hold you the author of all that has enumbered my spirit, in its upward flight. I can tell you this without the semblance of a curse; but still it is one; not from me, your child; but from your God. Pause; and read.

In secret, mother I dwell near thee, sharing thy love and providence, saved from sin, and happy; yes, happy; for I was near thee, and could add joy to thy declining life. Oh! how those years passed on in loving thee; two years, freighted with love, borne back and forth from thee to me—from me to thee. Two years, so short—yet, in retrospect, they seemed all I ever knew of joy or love. I felt thy life declining, and was pained from thee. I knew thy heart was hushed, or else, where was that freight of love borne with its heat to me? Two years—their close! do no task me for the recital.

I stood for entrance at my father's door, and knocked. It was denied me; yet, within that house, lay all I loved, calm, beautiful, spiritualized by death. Denied the sight of my mother! all, all I loved, all I had to love me—denied by my father! 'Oh, God! it was too bitter: I did not curse him—no, thank God, I did not—I fell to the earth, humbled, forlorn, wretched; little heeding and little caring if I ever rose. I was an outcast, then and forever.

I became calm; I prayed; yes, prayed to thee, my mother; that in this hour of darkest trial thou wouldst look down from thy home in Heaven, and bless thy son; wouldst teach him his duty, to God and man, and through all vicissitudes, show him the faith that would lead to God and thee, my mother. I felt strengthened; I arose, and from thy life I drew this knowledge; that my love for thee could draw thee nearer and nearer me, until thy presence seemed a balm, a joy. And they, within that lordly hall, who had spurned thy love, and made an outcast of thy son, yes, they were separated from thee forever; for eternity. So was I the gainer; and thus my revenge, revenge such as thou wouldst have approved, (dear mother) was obtained by loving thee.

Mother in Heaven, thy spirit is ever with me, guiding, guarding, staying my footsteps; to thee I looked for aid; it came, for, in life's battles I fought manfully, nor fell.

With the little I had left, I was to struggle, for I knew the world had a hearty welcome for the rich, but 'a bear's hug for the poor.' I crossed the ocean, there to carve a name white and pure as the stone above my mother's grave; white and pure as were the garments she now wore; white and pure as was her sainted spirit. Such was my resolve; how far I felt short, God was my judge. I became an author, sought for, treated with respect by men, honored, courted; wrote until ill health prevented this my only support. I travelled with a gentleman; I tired of him, so worldly, so gross he seemed, compared with the spirit ever walking at my side, and with which I ever held sweet communion.

Under an assumed name, my mother I felt unfettered, for this walk with grosser beings, and yearned for a heart, whereon to lay my store of love. I found one, young, buoyant, happy in my love; but ere I could make her mine, death took the prize, and I wept alone. Yet I was cheered, for by me stood my Mary and my mother.

Two years passed. I lay upon my death-bed, calm and resigned. My thoughts, often wandered to a Lordly home, wherein walked my father and my brother; rich noble, beloved; how strangely it contrasted with my home so bare of comfort, and of friends. Yet I was happy; and would not have changed, for all earth has, my heart of love for theirs of stone. They had wealth and honor; I had Mary and my mother.

Who will soothe their death-beds, or calm their troubled spirits? Who in that hour of trial can give them aid and comfort? Can my mother, the oppressed, the broken-hearted—can she? Will she? Hark! I feel her presence, nearer, nearer, nearer it comes, and I hear a gentle whisper. It says 'yes, my son, I will be near, that I may aid them by coming; to comfort their spirits and lead them to my God; for, in this land are all wrongs, forgotten and wiped away! Yes, then, their iron hearts shall be softened by the presence of Mary and my mother.

I am in the spirit home of those I love; God has judged me, and 'found me wanting' but by that light my mother sheds, and by the spirit of my Mary, I shall walk aright, blotting out, each hour, some unkind thought, perhaps unuttered, yet leaving its impress on my soul, detected by my God. Remember, oh! remember my dear ones of earth, that each thought is treasured (by the angels), that draw you heavenward, and remember, though unseen, you are guarded by spirits, as loving and as gentle as my Mary and my mother.

My spirit home is beautiful; beloved spirits walk with me; grossness cannot approach; and often, now, I wander on errands of mercy, giving comfort, cheering and bliss to those who will receive. Ye 'have taken me in,' and calmed a troubled spirit, by receiving this sim-

ple, constrained recital; for which I will do ye service. If fate deers you sorrow, I will try and cheer you; if sickness, I will there be with you to sustain. If you are passing away from earth, I will lead you to a happy entrance, to the spheres of love, where you shall be adjudged. Live, live, that you may meet your God without delay. The less imperfect will you be as ye listen to His teachings. Yes, I will be with you.

Would you could aid my father and my brother; far from me has passed all thought of wrong, to one who has wronged my mother; and I wish him joy, to aid his coming. Old and infirm, he lingers on your earth, so helpless, so gross, uneducated, uncheered; he spurned me from my mother's death-bed, but she came to mine and will be at his. Adieu.

If prayers for you avail, or aid you in your coming, be assured they shall be offered at the shrine of Grace; by PRESTES, MARY and my MOTHER.

SPIRITUALISM.

ON A DISCUSSION OF THE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF THE PHENOMENA ATTRIBUTED TO THE SPIRITS OF DEPARTED HUMAN BEINGS. By Pres. A. MAHAN, of Oberlin and Prof. REHA, of Philadelphia. (Published by the Buffalo, N. Y. Spiritist Association, Feb. 20, 1855. Price, 25 cents.)

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The Creole Village.

In travelling about our motley country, I am often reminded of Ariosto's account of the moon, in which the good paladin Astolph found every thing gathered up that had been lost on earth. So I am apt to imagine that many things lost in the old world, are treasured up in the new; having been handed down from generation to generation, since the early days of the colonies. A European antiquary, therefore, curious in his researches after the ancient and almost obliterated customs and usages of his country, would do well to put himself upon the track of some early band of emigrants, follow them across the Atlantic, and rummage among their descendants on our shores.

In the phraseology of New England might be found many an old English provincial phrase, long since obsolete in the parent country; with some quaint relics of the roundheads; while Virginia cherishes peculiarities characteristic of the days of Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh.

In the same way, the sturdy yeomanry of New Jersey and Pennsylvania kept up many usages fading away in ancient Germany; while many an honest, broad-bottomed cask, nearly extinct in venerable Holland, may be found flourishing in pristine vigor and luxuriance in Dutch villages, on the banks of the Mohawk and the Hudson.

In no part of our country, however, are the customs and peculiarities, imported from the old world by the earlier settlers, kept up with more fidelity than in the little, poverty-stricken villages of Spanish and French origin, which border the rivers of ancient Louisiana. Their population is generally made up of the descendants of those nations, married and intermarried together, and occasionally crossed with a slight dash of the Indian. The French character, however, floats on top, as, from its buoyant qualities, it is sure to do, whenever it forms a particle, however small, of an intermixture.

In these serene and dilapidated villages, art and nature stand still, and the world forgets to turn round. The revolutions that distract other parts of this motley planet, reach not here, or pass over without leaving any trace. The fortunate inhabitants have none of that public spirit which extends its cares beyond its horizon, and imparts trouble and perplexity from all quarters in newspapers. In fact, newspapers are almost unknown in these villages, and as French is the current language, the inhabitants have little community of opinion with their republican neighbors. They retain, therefore, their old habits of passive obedience to the decrees of government, as though they still lived under the absolute sway of colonial commanders instead of being part and parcel of the sovereign people, and having a voice in public legislation.

A few aged men, who have grown gray on their hereditary acres, and are of the good old colonial stock, exert a patriarchal sway in all matters of public and private import; their opinions are considered oracular, and their word is law.

The inhabitants, moreover, have none of that eagerness for gain, and rage for improvement, which keep our people continually on the move, and our country towns incessantly in a state of transition. There the magic phrases, "town lots," "water privileges," "railroads," and other comprehensive and soul-stirring words, from the speculator's vocabulary, are never heard. The residents dwell in the houses built by their forefathers, without thinking of enlarging or modernizing them, or pulling them down and turning them into granite stones. The trees, under which they have been born, and have played in infancy, flourish undisturbed; though, by cutting them down, they might open new streets, and put money in their pockets. In a word, the almighty dollar, that great object of universal devotion throughout our land, seems to have no genuine devotees in these peculiar villages; and unless some of its missionary preachers there, and erect banking houses and other pious shrines, there is no knowing how long the inhabitants may remain in their present state of contented poverty.

In descending one of our great western rivers in a steamboat, I met with two worthies from one of these villages, who had been on a distant excursion, the longest they had ever made, as they seldom ventured far from home. One was the great man, or Grand Seigneur of the village; not that he enjoyed any legal privileges or power there, every thing of the kind having been done away when the province was ceded by France to the United States. His sway over his neighbors was merely one of custom and convention, out of deference to his family. Beside, he was worth full fifty thousand dollars, an amount almost equal, in the imaginations of the villagers, to the treasures of King Solomon.

This very substantial old gentleman, though of the fourth or fifth generation in this country, retained the true Gallic features and deportment, and reminded me of one of those provincial potentates, that are to be met with in the remote parts of France. He was of a large frame, a ginger-bread complexion, strong features, eyes that stood out like glass knobs, and a prominent nose, which he frequently regaled from a gold snuff-box, and occasionally blew with a colored handkerchief, until it sounded like a trumpet.

He was attended by an old negro, as black as ebony, with a huge mouth, in a conical grin; evidently a privileged and favorite servant, who had grown up and grown old with him. He was dressed in creole style—with white jacket and trousers, a stiff shirt collar, that threatened to cut off his ears, a bright madras handkerchief tied round his head, and large gold ear-rings. He was the politest negro I met with in a western tour; and that is saying

a great deal, for, excepting the Indians, the negroes are the most gentlemanlike personages to be met with in those parts. It is true, they differ from the Indians in being a little extrajudicial and complimentary. He was also one of the merriest; and here, too, the negroes, however we may deplore their unhappy condition, have the advantage of their masters. The whites are, in general, too free and prosperous to be merry. The cares of maintaining their rights and liberties, adding to their wealth, and making presidents, engross all their thoughts, and dry up all the moisture of their souls. If you hear a broad, hearty, devil-may-care laugh, be assured it is a negro's.

Beside this African domestic, the seigneur of the village had another no less cherished and privileged attendant. This was a huge dog, of the mastiff breed, with a deep, hanging mouth, and a look of early gravity. He walked about the cabin with the air of a dog perfectly at home, and who had paid for his passage. At dinner time he took his seat beside his master, giving him a glance now and then, out of a corner of his eye, which bespoke perfect confidence that he would not be forgotten. Not was he—every now and then a huge morsel would be thrown to him, peradventure the half-picked leg of a fowl, which he would receive with a snap like the springing of a steel trap—one gulp, and all was down; and a glance of the eye told his master that he was ready for another consignment.

The other village worthy, travelling in company with the seigneur, was of a totally different stamp. Small, thin, and weak-faced, as Frenchmen are apt to be represented in caricature, with a bright, squirrel-like eye, and a gold ring in his ear. His dress was flimsy and sat loosely on his frame, and he had altogether the look of one with but little coin in his pocket. Yet, though one of the poorest, I was assured he was one of the merriest and most popular personages in his native village. Compere Martin, as he was commonly called, was the factotum of the place—sportsman, schoolmaster, and land-surveyor. He could sing, dance, and, above all, play on the fiddle, an invaluable accomplishment in an old French creole village; for the inhabitants have a hereditary love for balls and fetes; if they work but little, they dance a great deal, and a fiddle is the joy of their heart.

What had sent Compere Martin travelling with the Grand Seigneur I could not learn; he evidently looked up to him with great deference, and was assiduous in rendering him petty attentions; from which I concluded that he lived at home upon the crumbs which fell from his table. He was gayest when out of his sight; and had his song and his joke when forward; among the dark passengers; but altogether Compere Martin was out of his element on board of a steamboat. He was quite an other being; I am told, when at home, in his own village.

Like his opulent fellow-traveller, he too had his canine follower and retainer—one suited to his different fortunes—one of the civillest, most unoffending little dogs in the world. Unlike the lordly mastiff, he seemed to think he had no right on board of the steamboat; if you did but look hard at him, he would throw himself upon his back, and lift up his legs, as if imploring mercy.

At table he took his seat a little distance from his master; not with the bluff, confident air of the mastiff, but quietly and diffidently; his head on one side, with one ear dubiously slouched, the other hopefully cocked up; his under teeth projecting beyond his black nose, and his eye wistfully following each morsel that went into his master's mouth.

If Compere Martin now and then should venture to abstract a morsel from his plate, to give to his humble companion, it was edifying to see with what diffidence the exemplary little animal would take hold of it, with the very tip of his teeth, as if he would almost rather not, or fearful of taking too great a liberty. And then with what decorum would he eat it! How many efforts would he make in swallowing it, as if it stuck in his throat; with what daintiness would he lick his lips; and then with what an air of thankfulness would he resume his seat, with his teeth once more projecting beyond his nose, and an eye of humble expectation fixed upon his master.

It was late in the afternoon when the steamboat stopped at the village which was the residence of these worthies. It stood on the high bank of the river, and bore traces of having been a frontier trading post. There were the remains of stockades that once protected it from the Indians, and the houses were in the ancient Spanish and French colonial taste, the place having been successively under the domination of both those nations prior to the cession of Louisiana to the United States.

The arrival of the seigneur of fifty thousand dollars, and his humble companion, Compere Martin, had evidently been looked forward to as an event in the village. Numbers of men, women, and children, white, yellow, and black, were collected on the river bank; most of them clad in old-fashioned French garments, and their heads decorated with colored handkerchiefs, or white night-caps. The moment the steamboat came within sight and hearing, there was a waving of handkerchiefs, and a screaming and bawling of salutations, and felicitations, that baffled all description.

The old gentleman of fifty thousand dollars was received by a train of relatives, and friends, and children, and grandchildren, whom he kissed on each cheek, and who formed a procession in his rear, with a legion of domestics, of all ages, following him to a large, old-fashioned French house, that dominated over the village.

His black valet de chambre, in white jacket and trousers, and gold ear-rings, was met on the shore by a boon, though rustic companion,

a tall negro fellow, with a long, good-humored face, and the profile of a horse, which stood out from beneath a narrow-rimmed straw hat, stuck on the back of his head. The explosion of laughter of these two valets on meeting and exchanging compliments, were enough to electrify the country round.

The most hearty reception, however, was that given to Compere Martin. Every body, young and old, hailed him before he got to land. Every body had a joke for Compere Martin, and Compere Martin had a joke for every body. Even his little dog appeared to partake of his popularity, and to be caressed by every hand. Indeed, he was quite a different animal the moment he touched the land. Here he was at home; here he was of consequence. He barked, he leaped, he frisked about his old friends, and then would skid round the place in a wide circle, as if mad.

I traced Compere Martin and his little dog to their home. It was an old ruinous Spanish house, of large dimensions, with verandas overshadowed by ancient elms. The house had probably been the residence, in old times, of the Spanish commandant. In one wing of this crazy, but aristocratical abode, was nestled the family of my fellow-traveller; for poor devils are apt to be magnificently clad and lodged, in the cast-off clothes and abandoned palaces of the great and wealthy.

The arrival of Compere Martin was welcomed by a legion of women, children, and mongrel curs; and, as poverty and gaiety generally go hand in hand among the French and their descendants, the crazy mansion soon resounded with loud gossip and light-hearted laughter.

As the steamboat paused a short time at the village, I took occasion to stroll about the place. Most of the houses were in the French taste, with casements and rickety verandas, but most of them in flimsy and ruinous condition. All the wagons, ploughs, and other utensils about the place, were of ancient and inconvenient Gallic construction, such as had been brought from France in the primitive days of the colony. The very looks of the people reminded me of the villages of France.

From one of the houses came the hum of a spinning wheel, accompanied by a scrap of an old French chanson, which I have heard many a time among the peasantry of Languedoc, doubtless a traditional song, brought over by the first French emigrants, and handed down from generation to generation.

Half a dozen young ladies emerged from the adjacent dwellings, reminding me, by their light step and gay costume, of scenes in ancient France, where taste in dress comes natural to every class of females. The trim bodice and colored petticoat, and little apron, with its pockets to receive the hands when in an attitude for conversation; the colored kerchief would tauterfully round the head, with a coquettish knot peeping above one ear; and the neat slipper and tight drawn stocking, with its broad narrow ribbon embracing the ankle where it peeps from its mysterious curtain. It is from this ambush that Cupid sends his most inciting arrows.

While I was musing upon the recollections thus accidentally summoned up, I heard the sound of a fiddle from the mansion of Compere Martin, the signal, no doubt, for a joyous gathering. I was disposed to turn my steps thither, and witness the festivities of one of the very few villages I had met with in my wide tour, that was yet poor enough to be merry; but the bell of the steamboat summoned me to re-embark.

As we swept away from the shore, I cast back a wistful eye upon the moss-grown, rosy and ancient elms of the village, and prayed that the inhabitants might long retain their happy ignorance, their absence of all enterprise and improvement, their respect for the fiddle, and their contempt for the almighty dollar. I fear, however, my prayer is doomed to be of no avail. In a little while, the steamboat whirled me to an American town, just springing into bustling and prosperous existence.

The surrounding forest had been laid out in town lots; frames of wooden buildings were rising from among stumps and burnt trees. The place already boasted a court-house, a jail, and two banks, all built of pine boards, on the model of Grecian temples. There were rival hotels, rival churches, and rival newspapers; together with the usual number of judges, and generals, and governors; not to speak of doctors by the dozen, and lawyers by the score.

The place, I was told, was in an astonishing career of improvement, with a canal and two railroads in embryo. Lots doubled in price every week; every body was speculating in land; every body was rich; and every body was growing richer. The community, however, was torn to pieces by new doctrines in religion and in political economy; there were camp meetings, and agrarian meetings; and an election was at hand, which, it was expected, would throw the whole country into a paroxysm.

Alas! with such an enterprising neighbor, what is to become of the poor little creole village!

Every man carries about him a touchstone, if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glitterings, truth from appearances. And indeed the use and benefit of this touchstone, which is natural reason, is spoiled and lost only by assuming prejudices, overweening presumption, and narrowing our minds. The want of exercising it in its full extent of things intelligible, is that which weakens this noble faculty within us—Locke.

MEDIOCRITY.—Minds of moderate Calibre ordinarily condemn every thing which is beyond their range.—La Rochefoucauld.

Midnight Musings.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

I am alone in my chamber. The family have long since retired. I have heard their steps die away, and the doors clap to after them. The murmur of voices and the peal of remote laughter no longer reaches the ear. The clock from the church, in which so many of the former inhabitants of this house lie buried, has chimed the awful hour of midnight.

I have sat by the window, and mused upon the dusky landscape, watching the lights disappearing one by one from the distant village, and the moon rising in her silent majesty, and leading up all the silver pomp of heaven. As I have gazed upon these quiet groves and shadowy lawns, silvered over and imperfectly lighted by streaks of dewy moonshine, my mind has been crowded by "thick coming fancies" concerning those spiritual beings which—

—Walk the earth unseen both when we wake and when we sleep."

Are there, indeed, such beings? Is this space between us and the Deity filled up by innumerable orders of spiritual beings, forming the same gradations between the human soul and divine perfection, that we see prevailing from humanity down to the meanest insect? It is a sublime and beautiful doctrine inculcated by the early fathers, that there are guardian angels appointed to watch over cities and nations, to take care of good men and to guard and guide the steps of helpless infancy. Even the doctrine of departed spirits returning to visit the scenes and being, which were dear to them during the bodies' existence, though it has been denounced by the absurd superstitions of the vulgar, in itself is awfully solemn and sublime.

However lightly it may be ridiculed, yet, the attention involuntarily yielding to it whenever it is made the subject of serious discussion, and its prevalence in all ages and countries, even among newly discovered nations that have had no previous interchanges of thought with other parts of the world, prove it to be one of those mysterious and instinctive beliefs, to which, if left to ourselves, we should naturally incline.

In spite of all pride of reason and philosophy, a vague doubt will still lurk in the mind, and perhaps will never be eradicated, as it is a matter that does not admit of positive demonstration. Who yet has been able to comprehend and describe the nature of the soul; its mysterious connection with the body; or in what part of the frame it is situated? We know merely that it does exist; but whence it came, and when it entered into us, and how it is retained, and where it is seated, and how it operates, are all matters of mere speculation, and contradictory theories. If, then, we are thus ignorant of this spiritual essence, even while it forms a part of ourselves, and is continually present to our consciousness, how can we pretend to ascertain or deny its powers and operations, which released from its fleshly prison-house?

Every thing connected with our spiritual nature is full of doubt and difficulty. "We are fearfully and wonderfully made," we are surrounded by mysteries, and we are mysteries, even to ourselves. It is more the manner in which this superstition has been degraded, than its intrinsic absurdity, that has brought it into contempt. Raise it above the frivolous purposes to which it has been applied, strip it of the gloom and horror with which it has been enveloped, and there is none, in the whole circle of visionary creeds, that could more delightfully elevate the imagination, or more tenderly affect the heart. It would become a sovereign comfort at the bed of death, soothing the bitter tear wrung from us by the agony of mortal separation.

What could be more consoling than the idea, that the souls of those we once loved were permitted to return and watch over our welfare—that affectionate and guardian spirits sat by our pillows when we slept, keeping a vigil over our most helpless hours—that beauty and innocence, which had languished in the tomb, yet smiled unseen around us, revealing in those blest dreams wherein we live over again the hours of past endearments? A belief of this kind would, I should think, be a new incentive to virtue, rendering as circumstances, even in our most secret moments, from the idea that those we once loved and honored were invisible witnesses of all our actions, and still

It would take away, too, from that loneliness and destitution, which we are apt to feel more as we get on in our pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, and find that those who set forward with us lovingly and cheerily, on the journey, have one by one dropped away from our side. Place the superstition in this light, and I confess I should like to be a believer in it. I see nothing in it that is incompatible with the tender and merciful nature of our religion, or revolting to the wishes and affections of the heart.

There are departed beings that I have loved as I never again shall love in this world; that have loved me as I never again shall be loved. If such beings do ever retain in their blessed spheres the attachments which they felt on earth; if they take an interest in the poor concerns of transient mortality, and are permitted to hold communion with those whom they have loved on earth, I feel as if now, at this deep hour of night, in this silence and solitude, I could receive their visitation with the most solemn but unalloyed delight.

In truth, such visitations would be too happy for this world; they would take away from the bounds and barriers that hem us in and keep us from each other. Our existence is doomed to be made up of transient embraces and long separations. The most intimate friendship—of what brief and scattered portions of time does it consist! We take each other by the hand; and we exchange a few words and

looks of kindness; and we rejoice together for a few short moments; and then days, months, years intervene, and we have no intercourse with each other. Or if we dwell together for a season, the grave soon closes its gates, and cuts off all further communion; and our spirits must remain in separation and widowhood until they meet again in that more perfect state of being, where soul shall dwell with soul, and there shall be no such thing as death, or absence, or any other interruption of our union.

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Do not children gaze at the bright water as it sparkles in the spring? Do they not jump for the bubble as it floats lightly adown the stream? Do they not wet their feet to grasp a flower on the edge of the brook? The child is an emblem of man. Do we not all at some time of life grasp shadows, straws, for sunshines? What is life more than a shadow? Then sunshine cheers our hearts in the morning, but where is it in the evening? Can we boast of a breath beyond this present hour? Nature performs everlastingly her perfect work, and we must all go to her well-spring to drink inspiration, or the pure water of life. Nature's well-spring gives that to us freely, and we may all receive inspiration, health, and happiness from Nature's never-failing fountain. As with the pure well-spring of Nature, so it is with the deep well of Truth, from which we may all draw Happiness and love.—Fire-side Journal.

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